

Message Text

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47

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01

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R 011550Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8807

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1986

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINR, PINT, BU

SUBJECT: PERSONNEL CHANGES IN STATE AND MINISTERIAL COUNCILS

REF: A) SOFIA 1163; B) SOFIA 1977

1. SUMMARY. APPOINTMENT TO STATE COUNCIL OF PREVIOUSLY PURGED OPPONENTS ENCOURAGES SPECULATION THAT ZHIVKOV MAY BE IN SOMEWHAT LESS COMPLETE CONTROL THAN BEFORE. SUBSTANTIVE EVIDENCE, HOWEVER, LACKING. IVAN POPOV MOVED UP FROM DEPUTY PREMIER TO DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF STATE COUNCIL, AND MISHO MISHEV GETS STATE COUNCIL POSITION IN ADDITION TO OTHER POSTS. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING PERSONNEL CHANGES IN STATE COUNCIL AND MINISTERIAL COUNCIL WERE ANNOUNCED DURING OCTOBER 30 SESSION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY:

A) PETAR TANCHEV BECAME FIRST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF STATE COUNCIL REPLACING GEORGI TRAYKOV. TANCHEV GAVE UP POSITION AS FIRST DEPUTY PREMIER AND NO REPLACEMENT

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WAS NAMED.

B) IVAN POPOV WAS "RELEASED" AS DEPUTY PREMIER AND APPOINTED AS ADDITIONAL VICE CHAIRMAN OF STATE COUNCIL (HIGHEST BULGARIAN GOVERNMENTAL BODY).

C) MITKO GRIGOROV WAS MOVED UP AS ADDITIONAL VICE CHAIRMAN OF STATE COUNCIL.

D) VLADIMIR VIDENOV WAS "RELEASED" AS A MEMBER OF THE STATE COUNCIL TO TAKE UP OTHER (UNSPECIFIED) DUTIES.

E) MISHO MISHEV AND EVGENI MATEEV WERE APPOINTED AS MEMBERS OF STATE COUNCIL.

F) OGNYAN DOYNOV WAS APPOINTED DEPUTY PREMIER.

3. MOST INTERESTING ARE REEMERGENCE OF MATEEV AND ELEVATION OF GRIGOROV WHICH ENCOURAGE SPECULATION THAT ZHIVKOV'S AUTHORITY COULD BE UNDER ATTACK. BOTH GRIGOROV AND MATEEV WERE PURGED FROM HIGH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT POSITIONS IN THE MID-60S AFTER FALLING-OUT WITH ZHIVKOV. GRIGOROV, WHO AT ONE TIME WAS CONSIDERED BY SOME AS PROBABLE SUCCESSOR TO ZHIVKOV, HAD REPUTATION AT THAT TIME OF BEING EVEN MORE STRONGLY PRO-SOVIET THAN ZHIVKOV. MATEEV REPORTEDLY FELL BECAUSE OF HIS OPPOSITION TO ECONOMIC REFORMS, BUT SUBSEQUENT INFORMATION IN BIO FILES INDICATES REPORT MAY HAVE BEEN MISINTERPRETATION OF EVENTS. AT FIRST GLANCE, HOWEVER, REEMERGENCE OF MATEEV AND ELEVATION OF GRIGOROV, NEITHER OF WHOM HAS BEEN KNOWN TO BE AMONG ZHIVKOV'S FRIENDS, COULD MARK CONCESSIONS TO SOME KIND OF OPPOSITION WITHIN THE PARTY AND THUS POSSIBLY A DIMINUTION OF ZHIVKOV'S POWER.

4. POPOV'S APPOINTMENT AS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF STATE COUNCIL IS UPWARD STEP IN TERMS OF THE FORMAL HIEARCHY, BUT MUST BE WATCHED CLOSELY IN TERMS OF ACTUAL AUTHORITY AND POWER TO DETERMINE IF HE MAY HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM OPERATIONS TO FIGURE-HEAD POSITION. DOYNOV, WHO ACCOMPANIED POPOV ON HIS RECENT TRIP TO US QUITE POSSIBLY IN PREPARATION FOR TRANSITION, WAS APPARENTLY NAMED TO REPLACE POPOV'S EXPERTISE IN MINISTERIAL COUNCIL. AS COULD BE EXPECTED, CHIEF OF MFA EIGHTH DEPARTMENT (AMERICAS) TODAY TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT "ELEVATION" OF POPOV PUT HIM IN OVERALL SUPERVISORY POSITION AND WAS DEFINITE PROMOTION, BUT WE ARE NOT YET CONVINCED OF THIS.

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5. MISHO MISHEV'S STAR IS OBVIOUSLY RISING. IN JULY HE WAS CALLED TO HEAD TRADE UNION COUNCIL, A PROBLEM AREA (REFTEL A), AND ON SEPTEMBER 24 WAS NAMED MEMBER OF SECRETARIAT OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF BCP. HE NOW ROUNDS OUT DUTIES WITH HIGH GOVERNMENT POSITION. MISHEV IS KNOWN AS ZHIVKOV MAN AND APPOINTMENT COULD BE PARTIAL BALANCE FOR GRIGOROV AND MATEEV APPOINTMENTS.

6. TANCHEV'S APPOINTMENT AS FIRST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF STATE COUNCIL IS MERELY RESULT OF SUCCEEDING TRAYKOV AS SECRETARY AND DE FACTO LEADER OF AGRARIAN UNION (REFTEL B). STATE COUNCIL POSITION FOR AN AGRARIAN IS PART OF TWO-PARTY FACADE IN BULGARIA.

7. VIDENOV COULD BE ONLY LOSER WITHOUT SOME RECOMPENSE, ALTHOUGH HE MAY SUBSEQUENTLY BE APPOINTED TO SUBSTANTIVE POSITION. INTERESTINGLY, VIDENOV ALSO HAD FALLING-OUT WITH ZHIVKOV IN PAST, BUT SUPPOSEDLY ON OTHER SIDE OF SPECTRUM FROM GRIGOROV AND MATEEV, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE OF "NATIONALISM" OR SUB-STANDARD SOVIET SYMPATHIES.

8. COUPLE WITH JULY SHIFTS, THESE EVENTS DO EVIDENCE CHANGE BUT THE SIGNIFICANCE AND MAGNITUDE ARE STILL UN-DISCERNIBLE.
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